7: Thompson--372 [2] J-4 (no date) 1937 Laotians
116, 793

"Bonzes are organized into a clear-cut hierarchy, which is not exclusively masculine. They live in bonzeries, but in no sense form a clas apart. Despite strict vows and penalties for lapses, their lives are not like their Khmer colleagues' examples of austerity and chastity. They perform useful, if not intensive, service as dispensers of a mild moral education, hospitality, and shelter to wandering unfortunates. The Laotian climate and character have prevailed over Buddha's principles, so it is not surprising that Buddhism has lost much of its prestige in Laos."

10: d'Orleans--276 T-3 (1891-92) 1894 Laos
116, 563, 583, 591, 764, 793 Ethnic subgroups

"Marriages are easily made amongst the Khamouks; the young man's parents give sixty rupees to the girl's father and mother. After the marriage feast, the bridegroom sleeps one night in his father-in-law's house, then takes his wife home with him.

The dead are buried and not burnt; there is no priest, no religious ceremonies, but the master of the house cuts a fowl's throat and the mourners rub their knees with his blood. The men generally follow one stage in the bonzeries. (1) After a few months

1. I question whether this information does not apply more to the Laotians.

they are little bonze or Siang, then grand bonze or Tit ; a man who has not made one stage is Ba."

10: d'Orleans--311-312 T-3 (1891-92) 1894 Laos
116, 779, 793, 781

"It is not every man, indiscriminately, who is allowed to pay court to the young women, for one class is [312] excluded, viz., that of the bonzes and the aspirants to that order. The creed is Buddhism, very much the same as in Burmah and Siam. Apart from a few free-thinkers, who are regarded as brands plucked for the burning, the people are religious, that is to say they flock to the pagodas for certain festivals, bring presents, and provide liberally for the bonzes."

10: d'Orleans--312 T-3 (1891-92) 1894 Laos
116, 292, 793

"Luang Prabang and its suburbs have about eighty pagodas, distributed over four parishes, at the head of each being a bishop, who is to be distinguished from the other priests by a short skirt of violet-coloured silk. The ordinary priests are invariably attired in yellow, with a long skirt and with drapery thrown back over the shoulder like the Lamas of Thibet, while they all have shaved heads."

10: d'Orleans--312 [2] T-3 (1891-92) 1894 Laos
116, 793, 796

"The hierarchy is as follows, to begin from the bottom:—

The Tiona (brethren): these are the aspirant priests or students; in many cases sent to the pagoda by their family for a brief stage.

The Siammone (priests): these have already taken the vow of celibacy.

The Satouks, or venerables.

The Satouk Kron, or venerable masters. A priest becomes Satouk by popular election, and the people consecrate their choice by pouring the water of purification over the priest whom they have chosen.

The king alone names the Satouk Kron, who are appointed by his pouring 'royal water' over them during one of the great festivals when the idols are being washed."

10: d'Orleans--312-313 T-3 (1891-92) 1894 Laos
116, 162, 589, 793

"All the members of the religious corporation reside in the buildings near the pagodas, and they comprise nearly a tenth of the population, as a portion of the [313] body is constantly shifting. Moreover, women dressed in white, generally old maids or widows, also have their heads shaved and become female priests, their special duty being to make the collections at the pagodas."

10: d'Orleans--313 T-3 (1891-92) 1894 Laos
116, 202, 782, 793

"The signal for the commencement of the principal acts of worship is a big bell placed upon the summit of the hill, and it is also used as an alarm bell in the event of fire, in which case it is rung in quite a different way.

The bonzes give instruction to their pupils, preside over certain festivals and preach to the people: they read passages from the sacred books, inculcate charity, and above all impress upon their congregations the importance of making many presents to the pagoda so as to be well pleasing to heaven and to deserve everlasting life.

In a small chapel, in front of each pagoda, a bronze bell rings every afternoon at four o'clock, while on Sundays and fête days it rings at 1 A. M. The bonzes, be it added, are supposed to make only two meals a day, in the early morning and at noon, but their pupils are not expected to conform to this rule."

10: d'Orleans--313-314 T-3 (1891-92) 1894 Laos
116, 688, 785, 793

"From the second grade the priest is supposed to be a celibate, but the rule is sometimes disregarded, and it is no uncommon thing for a priest of loose habits to change his dres [sic] at dusk and go out to amuse himself. If his superiors catch him, he and his accomplice are sentenced to some such severe labour as supplying bricks for the pagoda, while in Cambodia they are more severe, the pagoda itself being closed.

These vows are not necessarily perpetual, and if a Tiammone feels that he no longer has any vocation, [314] his superior can release him from them upon the request of his relatives and after the performance of certain formalities. This, however, is a rare occurrence."

10: d'Orleans--321 [4] T-3 (1891-92) 1894 Laos
116, 554, 793

"Then come the bonzes, one of whom, a big, fat man, with a bosom as protuberant as that of a woman, is a very important personage, as his small violet petticoat indicates. Satouk Camdi, as he is called, has a frank, cheerful face and strong voice, which he makes ample use of to ply us with questions. Once settled down, with his porters who carry sunshade, fan, &c., it seems as if we should never get rid of him. My proposal to photograph him is very gleefully accepted, and he at once makes his brother and sister sit for their portraits as well."

10: d'Orleans--321-322 T-3 (1891-92) 1894 Laos
116, 153, 609, 793, 871

"At first, we received several visits from an aged bonze, also occupying an important position, who had been for many years friendly to the French. 'They are fathers and brothers to me,' he would say. During the second half of our visit, he had been [322] seized with a wasting illness, and we frequently went to see him. One of the interpreters of the Consulate was teaching his pupils French, and they struck me as being very intelligent, while their lessons were well done."

10: d'Orleans--332 [2] T-3 (1891-92) 1894 Laos
116, 346, 524, 778, 793

"Outside the principal building, in the courtyard of the pagoda, [LSS: the pagoda of Ouate Maï in Luang Prabang] are a series of ongmong, or small buildings which contain the statues of the gods; pyramids (Tâte) containing the bones of prominent bonzes or members of the Royal Family, and plaster bells like the lotus flower, behind all these buildings, hidden among the trees, being the houses of the bonzes, whose pupils we remark at play, the game at which they play, with a hollow ball made out of bamboo canes twisted together, being one which requires great skill."

10; d'Orleans--332 [3] T-3 (1891-92) 1894 Laos
116, 202, 346, 731, 793

"After leaving Ouate Maï, we ascend the small hill which commands a fine view of the town, about 350 feet above, and upon the summit of which are several small buildings and a gilt belfry in which is hung a tam tam about three feet in length. Several men keep guard over it and beat it to let the bonzes know when it is the hour for study, or else an alarm bell in case of fire. There is a grand view from here, as the city is at our feet, half hidden among the cocoa trees, one part, which was burnt last year and has been rebuilt, being less wooded than the others."

10: d'Orleans--333 T-3 (1891-92) 1894 Laos
116, 532, 778, 793, 177.35

[LSS: in Luang Prabang] "Above the market and built against the hill is the residence of one of the four leading bonzes from whom we had a visit yesterday; and upon going to see him there we find that the interior is ornamented with coloured designs and pictures, given him by Frenchmen, of the Eiffel Tower and so forth, with a small chapel in one corner and a library of religious books, many of which are rolled up in palm leaves. The only curious object in the adjoining pagoda is a wooden statue of Buddha (Pasine), in a crouching attitude, like that of a monkey when scratching his chin. The skull is very depressed and misshapen; and it is possible that those who offered the image were desirous of depicting the incident in his life, when having complained to God of the temptation which the flesh evoked in him, he received by way of reply a violent blow on the head in order to crush his carnal appetites."

23: Franck--279 T-2 (1924) 1926 Laotians
116, 231, 342, 793

"I spent the morning in a hot walk about the scattered thatched town, [EJ: Xieng Khuang] climbing to jungle-guarded half-ruined old stupas on the rounded hills behind it. Priests of the yellow robe had again appeared, dawdling about their simple monasteries with the leisureliness of men who know that to step on an insect means to be set back that far on the long and difficult road to Nirvana. Speaking of insects, the people of Tran-ninh boast that they are never troubled by mosquitos, because, all their domestic animals being at home under their pole-legged houses, these pests are so busy down there that they never trouble to rise to human height. The custom of living over unconfined stables is further exonerated by the warmth the animals are reputed to give the householders above--for so thin-blooded a race needs its central heating-plant also, during the short tropical 'winters.' "

23: Franck--298 T-2 (1924) 1926 Laotians
116, 366, 697, 793

"The main street of the capital, [EJ: Luang Prabang] dying out at either end in semi-jungle, is lined by a long market, facing the entrance to the king's palace. But for that matter there is a market just outside the royal palace in Madrid, too, and many beggars also, which here seem to be unknown, unless we count the yellow-clad priests sauntering along with their begging-bowls in the early morning. Even such an Eden as this is not without its serpents, however; and rattling chains on the legs of prisoners working about the town make strange contrast both to its quiet gentle atmosphere and to the regality of its king."

23: Franck--300-301 T-2 (1924) 1926 Laotians
116, 793, 779, 883

"Some of the old priests of Luang Prabang are honored as demigods by the people of the kingdom. They step forth from their holy dwellings only with a ceremonial parasol held over them, by one of the surrounding group of youngster attendants in the same bright yellow; and the French commissaire himself was almost servile in the respectful politeness with which he treated the most holy of them all, whose attitude sometimes suggested that it was he who had the upper hand. These bonzes may not even kill a flea, though the provocation must often be almost too strong to be borne; but they may eat beef and the flesh of other animals killed by some one else. Even the cynical French residents say they are real celibates, that they would be expelled from the order if they were caught breaking this particular vow. It might be harder to keep were not all young men expected to be priests for a year or two, as those of European lands become soldiers, only the ones to whom the monastic life appeals retaining the yellow robe, which the great majority soon discard for marriage. Little less sacred than the priests are the dogs that all but overrun the capital, eating the food laid out for gods and bonzes, much as the sacred oxen of India take their toll from pious shopkeepers. Held in a kind of Buddhist reverence by the people and more or less [301] protected by the priests, these mongrels are not even subjected to muzzle or license, though the French would like to improve their rules of sanitation to the extent of exterminating the harmless but self-confident curs."

23: Franck--343-344 T-2 (1924) 1926 Laotians
116, 771, 793

"The smallest village has a few Buddhist priests, the support of whom by giving them food seems to be almost the only religious practice of the lay inhabitants. The younger bonzes [344] make the rounds each morning with their begging-bowls before the sun is high, and now and then a man or woman kneels on the ground as a priest pauses to perform for a moment or two some hocus-pocus in reward for the charity, and then turns abruptly away, as if to imply that the giver has had his money's worth. Begging is not looked upon as in the West, but as something perfectly natural, so that neither giver nor receiver seems to feel he is doing anything out of the ordinary. If I may judge by my two princely companions, all Laosian Buddhists say their prayers before going to bed as religiously as any Christian, nay, as any true Mohammedan. But they were more like people thanking a kindly benefactor with unforced gratitude than like men praying out of dread of a punishing God, and the true Laosians at least showed little if any of the fear of demonology rampant among the super-superstitious Chinese. No doubt nature is so gentle with them that the religion of fear, the dread and consequent attempts at propitiation of innumerable evil forces always waiting to do them harm, does not grow up within them."

68: Mouhot--154 [2] N-5 (1858-61) 1864 Laotians
116, 782, 793

"[HD: In the villages of southern Luang Prabang province] The Laotian priests are continually praying in their pagodas; they make a frightful noise, chanting from morning to night. Assuredly they ought to go direct to Paradise."

69: Lewis T-5 (1950) 1951 AM1 Indochina
Laotians AM8

403 electricians hugged each other, and, enchanted by the din, the
527 audience began to drift away from the theatre and make for the dancing floor.

527 The second attraction in order of popularity was a love-court. A
584 quadrangular arrangement of tables had been formed, covered by a
782 thatched roof raised on posts decorated with woven bamboo
793 representations of animals, weapons and phallic emblems. Seated round the tables in the interior of the square were the girls, and their suitors sat facing them. Between the couples had been placed offerings of food, brought by the girls. Originally a tribute to some ancient, forgotten fertility god, a primeval Thai Venus, the offerings would be given, next day, to the bonzes. All through the night the bantering of witticisms, the singing and the exchange of improvised verse would go on, accompanied by the accordion-like
[534] wheezings of the Kène, the Stone Age gourd pipes of Laos. Sometimes through a happy fault in the circuit the splutter and bellow of the loud-speakers would suddenly lapse, and you heard the beehive dronings of the communal love-making, the kènes, and the voice of the presiding bonze, preaching continually in an archaic, incomprehensible language from the wicker cage into which he had been fastened. The cage symbolized the protection of his religion from these earthly distractions. As soon as inspiration failed he would be relieved by the next on the rota of preachers, waiting now to take his place.

584 Love-courts are the accepted preliminary to the consummation of
[533] affairs of the heart, which — despite European conviction that
576 romantic love is a Western invention — are accompanied in Laos by much versifying and mild, self-imposed frustrations. When, for instance, a well-known beauty is wooed by a number of suitors, a serenading match may be arranged on the veranda of her house to permit her to test under competitive conditions the poetic and musical capabilities of each of them. Complete pre-marital freedom
[836] is recognized, but much outward reserve is maintained. There is a time and place for everything. It is incorrect, for example, to

565 The common people, kind and carefree in character, roamed
175* over the country in all directions as easy-going masters, leaving
/462/ household tasks to the women and the work of the fields to dependents of an inferior race or to slaves. They were excellent boatmen and traders rather than farmers, so that they liked to perform the function of peddlers and served as a link between the multiple /55/ varieties of mankind which inhabited Lan-Xang.

567 Slavery existed--slaves could be obtained through capture, as
175* the result of debt or through trade--and brought high profits to those
563 who engaged in this traffic. In the region of Muong-Swa there was also a kind of serfdom which was applied to certain Kha tribes placed under the patronage of the king, the princes or the chief representatives of the nobility.

565 But if we consider the gentle and happy temperament of this
175* people whose good humor made up for everything, we are justified in believing that the relations between the various social levels must have been free of any harshness.

191 They spoke a dialect derived from the language which was imported into the basin of the Ménam by Rama Khamheng at the end of the thirteenth century and which was itself derived from the
771 graphs of India (1). They practiced orthodox Buddhism together
793
554

1. Cf. Mission Pavie, op. cit. /Études diverses, Vol. II, "Recherches sur l'Histoire du Cambodge du Laos et du Siam"/ Inscription of Sukhothaï translated by Father Schmitt, p. 192: "It was in (1287 A. D.) that the king Rama-Khameng summoned a teacher who created Thaï writing."

with the cult of the "Phi" or Genii which represented for them the beneficent or maleficent forces of Nature. The bonzes were of comparatively pure morals amidst these peoples for whom enjoyment and pleasure were, when /56/ all is considered, the true gods. Although they were fairly ignorant and recited their prayers in Pali
/782/ without understanding them, they did not lack a certain air of nobility. They also enjoyed a high regard and had as much favor as they could desire. The bonzeries[1] which were built near the pagodas were at once places of inviolable asylum, schools frequented by all the children of the village, and workshops where trades could be learned.

/[1] Buddhist Monasteries--Analyst./

633 be seen from a great distance. To be sure, it extends over a prodigi-
174 ous area and is so large that one would take it for a city... The king's
344 apartments, which are embellished with a superb and magnificent portico and a large number of beautiful rooms accompanied by a large parlor, are all made of wood which will not decay and ornamented inside and outside with excellent bas-reliefs so delicately gilded that they seem rather to be covered with flakes of gold than gold leaf.

"From that point one enters the courtyards which are extremely spacious, and one first sees a long line of houses built entirely of brick and roofed /113/ with tile in which the second wives usually stay, and outside another row of houses built alongside in the same symmetry for the mandarins' officers. I could write a whole volume if I undertook a minute description of all the other parts of the palace, the riches, the departments, the gardens and a number of other such things...

565 "The houses of the principal lords and of well-to-do persons are
342 very high and beautiful, and are all made of wood with a great deal
352 of artifice and a greater or lesser number of ornaments, depending on the expense to which the individuals are willing to go, but I must confess that the common people and the poor are housed extremely badly
● /793/ and that their dwellings are cabins and huts rather than houses. Only the talapoins (bonzes), who are the priests of the idols, have permission to build their monasteries and houses out of brick and stone. Instead of rugs and other such furnishings, persons of quality use small reed mats in which the weave is so delicate and so highly ornamented with figures and various leaf patterns that, to my mind, there is nothing more beautiful nor more pleasing to the eye. They ordinarily use them to cover the walls of /114/ their rooms and houses inside and outside, which they keep very clean and of which they take particular care...

643* "The king is absolute and independent... all the land belongs to
/423/ him, and he disposes as absolute lord of all that his subjects possess...
631 offices, employment, honors and wealth depend absolutely on the
174 king, who raises those persons who please him most to the highest offices in the kingdom.... The principal dignities and offices of the kingdom are eight in number. The first is that of viceroy general... and because the kingdom is divided into seven provinces seven other viceroys are appointed... there are also other governments of less consequence which depend on the former both in respect to civil affairs and to those which concern war.... Each of these provinces has
/701/ its militia, which consists of infantry and cavalry.

as a blessing.

One fact worthy of note is that the "Phi-pop"--men, women and even adolescents--are extremely intelligent folk with lively eyes and full of a strong will and energy. They know [Illustration here] a host of recipes and therapeutic formulas which have been handed down to them by their parents. They might be described as bonesetters or people who have medicine as a sideline, and who act on weak minds and nervous temperaments by the power of suggestion. "Phi-pop" women and girls are usually quite pretty.

One of the methods most widely used to gain the favor of the "Phis" is to play deafening music.

"It is not at all unusual to hear diabolic and uninterrupted music in a Laotian house for several days and nights running. In this house there is a person who is seriously ill. All the noise is designed to frighten or to assuage the spirit in the sick person's body and to persuade or force it to [153] leave the body of the invalid. The sick person generally succumbs under the waves of this curative but noisy harmony" (1).

(1) Le Laos français, op. cit. [Lieutenant-colonel Tournier (Superior Resident in Laos), "Notice sur le Laos français," in Revue Indochinoise, Hanoi, 1900.]

Religion of the Thais. They have neither pagodas nor bonzes, but practice ancestor worship and have a great veneration for the "Spirits or Genii," to whom they make offerings on all occasions.

In the first room of the house there stands a bamboo altar. The "Spirits" or "Phis" of dead forbears are supposed to inhabit this altar, which is composed of two different levels, the highest one for the male Phis and the other for the female Phis. At its foot there is an opening covered with an elliptical wooden ornament shaped like a mouth. It is there, on this "ancestors' mouth," that the head of the family places offerings and prayers, especially when a member of the family is sick. In principal an animal is never killed without some scrap of food or a few drops of blood being offered to the ancestors' mouth.

"Spirits, whether genii or demons, are everywhere--in the sky, on earth, in the forests, in the water. They are the object of a widespread cult over which individuals who might be described as

776 lay priests preside. These lay priests, or rather these servants of the
• 793 Spirits, correspond to the Guardians of the Genii in the Buddhist
religion. Usually they exercise their ministry only when one of
755 their countrymen falls sick or dies.

"In case of a serious illness the servant of the Spirits goes to the sick person's house, goes to his side and recites a few prayers. Then he takes a bowl of uncooked rice on which he stands an egg with the smallest end upwards. With his right hand the officiant drops a certain number of grains of rice on the point of the egg, performing this operation three times in all. If the same number of grains of rice remain on the point of the egg each time, this means that a "Spirit" has entered the sick person's body.

787 "By means of similar maneuvers, the Spirit is then questioned to find out what he wants to eat. Depending on the answer, a buffalo, an ox or a pig may be killed. The designated animal is slaughtered and then scorched without being skinned so as to destroy the hairs which cover it. The entrails are taken out and carefully washed [154] in running water, then replaced in the animal's body. The victim is taken to the altar of the Spirits, which is located outside the village, and placed with its head towards the altar. Then prayers are said asking the Spirit to cure the sick person. When the ceremony is over the animal is taken back to the village, where it is cut into pieces and divided among all the inhabitants. The invalid rarely gets well.

"There are also sorcerers and witches among the Thais, who are consulted in circumstances of lesser importance.

[775] "The Thais believe in metempsychosis, although their ideas on the subject are not very clear" (1).

(1) Le Laos français, op. cit. [Lieutenant-colonel Tournier (Superior Resident in Laos), "Notice sur le Laos français," in Revue Indochinoise, Hanoi, 1900.]

771 Religion of the Khas. Among the Khas, even those who practice
782 Buddhism, the only existing religion is a religion of "Phis" which is
similar to the Thai belief in "Spirits, Genii and Demons." The
776 outer manifestations of this cult consist of offerings of rice, flowers and fruit, but never include sacrifices of animals. Small shelters which affect the form of an ordinary house are built at the entrance to villages to receive propitiatory offerings destined for the "Phi".